

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of July 28, 2015**

- I. **ROLL CALL..** Chair John Quinn III, Selectmen Lynn Doney, Matthew Gadbois, Kenneth W. Goslant, and K. David Maxwell. Also present were Town Manager Jeffrey Schulz, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Ambulance Chief Lawton Rutter, Arlington Supplee (Board of Listers), Michele Braun (Special Projects Consultant), Jessica Louisas (Milone & MacBroom), Brandon Gallant (Northfield Ambulance Service), Kathi Tynan (Mayo Healthcare), Robert Berkey, Diane Vanecek, Mark Bolding, George Goodrich III, Jim Roux, Ann Smith (Friends of the Winooski River), and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News*).

Chair Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Board members and the public were asked to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- a. **CDBG-DR Grant Application (FEMA Buyout Program Site Redevelopment).** Chair Quinn began the public hearing by reading the Notice of Public Hearing as follows:

The Town of Northfield is considering making application to the State of Vermont for a Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Implementation Grant under the Vermont Community Development Program. A public hearing will be held at Brown Public Library (93 South Main Street) on July 28, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. to obtain the views of citizens on community development, to furnish information concerning the amount of funds available and the range of community development activities that may be undertaken under this program, the impact to any historic and archaeological resources that may be affected by the proposed project, and to give affected citizens the opportunity to examine the proposed statement of projected use of these funds. The proposal is to apply \$300,000.00 in CDBG-DR Funds which will be used to accomplish the following activities. There are seven (7) contiguous properties on a 5-acre parcel between the Dog River and Water Street. This area will be subject to FEMA's standard deed restrictions, plus a conservation easement held by VHCB. The Friends of the Winooski River have hired Milone & MacBroom to conduct a hydraulic and hydrologic study to design up to four alternatives for ecological restoration and enhanced floodplain function in the adjacent river system. Construction of the chosen alternative will be the first phase of site redevelopment in 2016. One outcome of this phase of the project will be a reduction of flood risk to the adjacent neighborhood. The Vermont Downtown Action Team held a placemaking workshop in 2014, in which Town officials, Water Street neighbors, representatives of FWR and VHCB, geologists from Norwich University, and others worked with landscape architects to produce a conceptual design for the park. This plan includes floodable recreational amenities close to the street, such as volleyball courts, picnic tables, and an organic playscape, and a series of intersecting circular walking paths with landscaping. The Town intends to work with the neighborhood and other stakeholders to ensure the final design meets residents' needs and vision of a desirable downtown riverfront park, as well as ensuring compliance with flood hazard regulations.

Chair Quinn then opened the floor to questions or comments. Robert Berkey lives on Water Street and is concerned about the noise, traffic, etc. that would be generated should a playground be built on the street. He noted that there already are two (2) recreational parks in Northfield and they don't seem to be overused. Michele Braun is Northfield's former Zoning Administrator now employed as a consultant on special projects that were begun during her tenure. She stated that when Water Street residents were informally polled on what would be the best use for the FEMA buyout properties, many mentioned the need for an off-street area for neighborhood children to play. Selectman Maxwell asked if the residents would be asked for additional input as the project proceeds. Ms. Braun stated that always was the plan. However, additional outreach was delayed until design plans were developed (see presentation below) so that realistic options could be considered. There being no other questions or comments, Chair Quinn closed the public hearing at 7:08 p.m.

- b. **CDBG-DR Grant Application (Fairground Road Bridge Replacement Project).** Chair Quinn began the public hearing by reading the Notice of Public Hearing as follows:

The Town of Northfield is considering making application to the State of Vermont for a Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Implementation Grant under the Vermont Community Development Program. A public hearing will be held at Brown Public Library (93 South Main Street) on July 28, 2015 at 7:00 pm to obtain the views of citizens on community development, to furnish information concerning the amount of funds available and the range of community development activities that may be undertaken under this program, the impact to any historic and archaeological resources that may be affected by the proposed project, and to give affected citizens the opportunity to examine the proposed statement of projected use of these funds. The proposal is to apply for \$61,000 in CDBG-DR Funds which will be used by the Town of Northfield as the local match portion for a FEMA-funded Tropical Storm Irene disaster project known as the Fairground Bridge Replacement Project.

Chair Quinn then opened the floor to questions or comments. Manager Schulz explained that the breakdown of funding for the Fairground Road Bridge Replacement Project was that FEMA would pay for ninety percent (90%) of project costs; the State of Vermont would pay for five percent (5%); and the Town of Northfield was responsible for the remaining five percent (5%) as the “local match” amount. Now that the project has been completed, Northfield has the opportunity to apply for state funds that would cover all but \$5,000 of the remaining costs. There being no other questions or comments, Chair Quinn closed the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

- IV. **SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** Chair Quinn noted that Fire Chief Peter J. DeMasi was scheduled to address the Select Board under “Department Head Reports” but is unable to attend tonight. His slot on the agenda will be filled by Listers Chair Arlington Supplee who has asked to be here tonight to request the Select Board to correct the 2015 Grand List under “Errors and Omissions.”

V. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):**

- a. **Jessica Louisas (Milone & MacBroom) and Ann Smith (Friends of the Winooski River): Presentation on Dog River Floodplain Study and Water Street Park.** Ms. Braun stated that when this study was begun it became known that the Town of Northfield would own continuous Water Street parcels along the Dog River that had been cleared of flood-damaged structures as part of the FEMA Buyout program. The study focused on what steps can be taken to work within the floodplain to reduce the chances of future storms resulting in flood damage to the remaining structures in the area. Ann Smith from the Friends of the Winooski River stated that her organization has worked with the Town of Northfield on other projects involving the Dog River and it hired the engineering firm Milone & MacBroom to create a study that provided alternative actions designed to prevent future neighborhood flooding. Jessica Louisas is representing Milone & MacBroom tonight and stated that her firm has performed similar studies for several Vermont communities. The first step taken was to walk along the riverbank from the Cross Brothers Dam southward to the Norwich University Rugby field. During this initial survey, a berm in the river was discovered that had been intended to reduce the flood risk but has had the opposite effect. Also, the engineers noted the locations where the Dog River rapidly narrows and/or curves, which contributes to overflowing water during storms. If the berm is removed and the floodplain lowered, flooding waters would be directed away from the neighborhood. The floodplain along the river would be lowered by an average of a half foot (0.5'), which doesn't sound like much but would make a great difference to homeowners who now see a few inches of standing water in their basements after major storms.

Ms. Braun noted that the study provides numerous alternatives (with recommendations) on how to achieve flood prevention. Ms. Smith added that before any work is put out to bid, additional information would have to be collected once the Select Board has indicated that this project should proceed. Chair Quinn asked what would be the cost of constructing the floodplain improvements. Ms. Braun estimated about \$180,000 and this amount is included in the grant application discussed earlier. She added that the Town already has other funding on hand for this project. Ms. Smith stated that should project costs overrun, there probably would be more funds available as the State of Vermont is very enthusiastic about this project.

Selectman Goslant asked if any work would be done in the riverbed itself. Ms. Braun stated that dredging was considered as one of the options but it was determined that it would not be as effective as the other alternatives presented. For one thing, riverbed dredging would become a recurring expense whereas the other options would be a one-time cost only. Selectman Goslant is concerned that Vermont towns are not allowed to maintain the rivers that flow through them.

Mr. Berkey lives on Water Street near the Wall Street Bridge and asked how these proposals would affect his property. Ms. Louisas stated that since storm waters would be diverted away from the property by lowering the floodplain, there probably would be added flood protection. Diane Vanecek asked where Milone & MacBroom has completed similar projects. Ms. Louisas said that work done in Bennington has performed very well. Numerous Vermont towns hit hard by Tropical Storm Irene are in the same planning stages as Northfield.

Chair Quinn thanked Ms. Smith, Ms. Louisas, and Ms. Braun for the presentation. Ms. Braun noted that the Town should find out in September if the grant application has been successful or not. If the grant is awarded, the next steps in the process can begin.

VI. **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT**

- a. **Listers Chair Arlington Supplee.** Mr. Supplee reported that after receiving erroneous information from the Vermont Department of Taxes about new legislation on Covenant Restricted Housing, the Listers combined two parcels' identification numbers for a structure on King Street. He subsequently learned from the homeowner that although she owns the house, the Central Vermont Community Land Trust owns the land on which it is located and is responsible for paying the property taxes (for which she pays monthly rent). Mr. Supplee is asking the Select Board to reverse his previous action; there will be no impact on the Grand List total amount. Motion by Selectman Maxwell, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to accept the recommendation from the Board of Listers and restore the two separate parcel identification numbers. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. **July 14, 2015 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Maxwell, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VIII. APPROVAL OF BILLS

- a. **Warrant #03-16.** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve Warrant #03-16 in the amount of \$549,432.62. Selectman Maxwell asked why the Town paid to test the new water main on Central Street; shouldn't the contractor pay for this? Manager Schulz explained that it was less expensive for the Town to pay for this directly rather than have the contractor arrange for this and bill us later. Chair Quinn asked if it was necessary to pay for the elevator in the Brown Public Library to be inspected every three (3) months. Selectman Goslant noted that if the elevator ever breaks down, it would cost much more to have it repaired. Chair Quinn asked if the number of inspections could be reduced to bi-annual. Manager Schulz will look into this. Chair Quinn asked if Manager Schulz will be investigating how the radiator on one of the Police Department vehicles was damaged. This will be done. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. **Approval of Bi-Weekly Payroll through July 19, 2015.** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the bi-weekly payroll in the amount of \$86,819.56. Selectman Doney asked why there was more overtime for the Water and Sewer Department employees. Manager Schulz said the main reason was that an employee has to come in over the weekend to monitor the operations of the wastewater treatment facility. Chair Quinn would like to know how many hours this takes on a regular basis. Manager Schulz will check on this. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

IX. SELECT BOARD

- a. **Approval of Private Road Name (Honeysuckle Terrace).** Manager Schulz stated that at the last meeting (07/14/15), E911 Coordinator Lawton Rutter had asked that the private road located off Vermont Route 12 South known as Honeysuckle Terrace have its name formally adopted by the Select Board. Since that meeting, the property owners were contacted to see if they have strong feelings either way on this matter. Mr. Rutter said that the need to make the road name official was because a new structure is being built on the road and the property owner needed an official E911 address when applying for home insurance, etc. Once the name has been formally adopted, Mr. Rutter will need to correct the house numbers that some residents have been using as they do not meet the E911 Board's standards. Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Maxwell, to formally name this private road "Honeysuckle Terrace." Selectman Goslant lives on this road and noted that when he purchased his home the road name listed on the deed was "Honeysuckle Terrace." Mark Bolding also lives on the private road and his home was the first built in the area. The name "Honeysuckle Terrace" has never been attached to his home and he currently uses a Vermont Route 12 South home address. He does not like the name "Honeysuckle" at all and does not want to be compelled to use it in the future. He had requested that his long driveway be provided with a separate name but Mr. Rutter refused this request because the E911 Board does not allow a named private road to branch off from another. George Goodrich is the resident building the new home. While he is not crazy about the "Honeysuckle" name, it is the road name recognized by our local emergency services. He also would like this matter resolved this evening since he needs a confirmed E911 address as soon as possible. Mr. Bolding doesn't see a lot of history for the road name since only two existing structures now use it. Chair Quinn agreed with Mr. Goodrich that changing the name at this point would be confusing to emergency responders. Mr. Rutter, who also serves as Ambulance Chief, confirmed that having one familiar name for this road is the best solution. Mr. Bolding noted that some of the people who own property on the road (without structures) live out of state and have not been contacted about their feelings in this matter. Mr. Goodrich sees no need for further delay. Although this is not the name he would have chosen himself, it is familiar to Northfield residents and the emergency responders. Selectman Goslant also believes that there is no need to change the "Honeysuckle Terrace" name since that is what it is has been since he bought his property. **Motion passed 4-0-1, with Selectman Goslant abstaining.** Chair Quinn expressed his regrets to Mr. Bolding that another solution could not be found.
- b. **Authorization to Purchase Two (2) Powered Stretchers.** Manager Schulz noted that another matter brought up and discussed last week was Northfield Ambulance Service (NAS) Chief Rutter's request to purchase two powered stretchers. There is money in this year's budget to purchase one but not both. Chief Rutter explained that he had planned to purchase the single stretcher this year and buy another in a year or two. However, after seeking bid proposals and choosing a dealer, he was provided the option to purchase two at this time through a no-interest purchase agreement. Each powered stretcher costs about \$18,993 so the total cost would be \$37,989 with three (3) payments of \$12,663 each. The first payment would be due thirty (30) days after delivery and other payments would be due one and two years after. Selectman Goslant asked why this option had not been presented during the budget process. Chief Rutter said that he had not yet received the \$5000 VLCT grant that spurred him to seek the bid proposals. Chair Quinn noted that since the payment schedule is spread over three (3) years, the cost is covered in this and the next fiscal year's budgets. The last payment in two (2) years can be budgeted ahead of time. Chief Rutter noted that although the payment will be spread out, the stretchers will be put into service as soon as they arrive. Although he usually favors keeping to approved budgets, Selectman Goslant believes this is a wise investment given the increased workload that NAS has taken on over the past year that has led to an unanticipated increase in NAS revenues. Motion by Selectman Goslant, seconded by Selectman Doney, to authorize the purchase of two powered stretchers as recommended by Chief Rutter. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- c. **DRAFT Civil Ordinance to Establish Variable Rate Pricing by Volume or Weight for Municipal Solid Waste Collection.** Manager Schulz reported that since new provisions of the state recycling law came into effect this month, municipalities are required to create and then enforce a new pricing structure for collecting solid waste. This pricing already is in place at the Northfield Transfer Station but would also apply to private haulers. They would have to develop their own compliant variable rates that would be subject to Select Board approval. Manager Schulz has the draft civil ordinance prepared that will be discussed at a Public Hearing scheduled for Tuesday, August 25, 2015. If there are no objections, the ordinance will be adopted at the regular meeting that will follow.
 - d. **Appointment of Town Manager as Authorized Tax Sale Buyer.** Manager Schulz stated that the auction of tax delinquent properties is scheduled for tomorrow afternoon (07/26/15) at 3:00 p.m. Of the original twenty-five (25) parcels that were advertised for sale, only six (6) remain. Although it is likely that there will be interest in the remaining properties, it has been the past practice that the municipality will purchase a parcel should its bid price fall well below value. Should that happen, Manager Schulz would like the Select Board to authorize him to purchase the parcel(s). Motion by Selectman Maxwell, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to appoint Manager Schulz as the authorized tax sale buyer. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
 - e. **Northfield Observances' Request to hold Labor Day Weekend Soap Box Derby.** As discussed at the last meeting, Northfield Observances has made a request to close down a section of South Main Street for a couple hours on Sunday, September 6, 2015, in order to hold a soap box derby. The Board members have expressed some reservations regarding the location and/or duration of the event. Manager Schulz tried to reach out to Northfield Observances to discuss alternatives but never received a response. Chair Quinn would like someone from Northfield Observances to attend the next meeting (08/11/15) and make this request in person.
- X. **BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS**
- a. **Fairground Bridge Sidewalks.** Selectman Maxwell had expressed concern at the last meeting about the gravel paths that lead to the new bridge. He asked if Manager Schulz has learned whether or not they would be paved in the future. Manager Schulz said that the Town Highway crew will pave the sidewalk for a few hundred dollars.
 - b. **King Street Water Project.** Selectman Gadbois asked if property owners along East Street are being contacted beforehand regarding hookups, scheduled water outages, etc. Manager Schulz confirmed that the contractor and Utility Superintendent Patrick DeMasi have been making personal contact.
 - c. **Economic Development Committee.** Chair Quinn would like the Committee to develop a formal economic development policy so that taxpayers can see how their money is being spent. He also would like to use economic development funds to develop a more user-friendly and professional-looking municipal website than the current one.
- XI. **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT.** Manager Schulz had nothing to add to his written report.
- XII. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED)**
- a. **George Goodrich, Trans-Video.** Mr. Goodrich took personal responsibility for the fact that Trans-Video has been unable to televise Select Board meetings the past few months. He and his staff have been very busy recently with a major upgrade of their cable service. Now that this upgrade is largely finished, it will be his priority to restart televising the meetings. Selectman Maxwell asked if recorded meetings are archived. Mr. Goodrich stated that Trans-Video used to keep tapes of old meetings but just doesn't have the storage capacity to do so. Chair Quinn asked about the possibility of live streaming meetings over the internet. Mr. Goodrich looked into this and found that it would require an incredible amount of bandwidth. The process would have to be outsourced and the cost of video archives would be about \$2000 per month. None of the Board members seemed interested in this expense. Selectman Goslant would like the meetings televised so that the public can see what the Select Board is doing (rather than rely on rumors, the local newspaper, etc.).
- XIII. **ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Selectman Maxwell, seconded by Selectman Doney, to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Town Manager's Office.

These minutes were approved at the regular Select Board meeting of August 11, 2015.